11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

The labor movement, limited as it is, has been in the hands of Eritreans on the one hand, and primarily non-Amhara workers in the south. Student associations have been formed chiefly at the instigation and under the aegis of foreign staff members; though here, as with the professional associations, modernized Amhara have sometimes played a leading role.

Once the new associations had been introduced, the Amhara like other Ethiopians were quick to adopt and expand them. Their participation in these new associations, however, has been affected, as might be expected, by the intrusion of traditional behavior patterns. Three examples of such behavior patterns come readily to mind.

(1) While the *equb* is conceived as a kind of credit union and as a focus for communal sociability, the *co-operative* sentiment tends to be lacking among members of Amhara *equb*, at least those of which the author has any knowledge. For example, in case of dire need, an *equb* member who desires the lump sum out of turn may be forced to *buy* the amount from the weekly winner, sometimes by forfeiting as much as ten or twenty per cent of the amount. By capitalizing on the crises of others, some enterprising *equb* members are able to sell their successful claims several times. Furthermore, in the early years of their existence, *equb* were frequently faced with the problem created by members who won the money early in the cycle, left town with the money, and did not return to pay their later installments. This difficulty has been met to some extent by the requirement of securing one or two guarantors for each person who enters an *equb*, but problems of this nature have led to altercations that have brought many *equb* members into court.

(2) The behavior of members of Amhara territorial *māhebar* is essentially that of a traditional social or civil gathering. The big men are seated in places of honor; the rest of the people stand quietly by. After a protracted period of exchanging greetings and milling about, the crowd listens respectfully while one or more of the big men makes a statement, and perhaps exchanges a few words with the group's secretary; and then the gathering disbands. Although the *māhebar* is organized with respect to the attainment of specific goals, the substance of the meetings is instumental to a very slight degree. The assembly rarely involves a meeting of minds to discuss an issue or a common problem, or to work out a program of action; but exists primarily as an occasion for the resonance of primordial sentiments by virtue of shared territorial attachments.

(3) In all associations, finally, certain traditional characteristics which are incongruent with the optimum conduct of groups come to the fore. This is no less true of the modern-educated than of the traditionals. Members fail to come on time to arranged meetings or neglect to come altogether.* They

* The *equb* has attempted to check this pattern by imposing fines on members who come late.